

# **JOINT TASK FORCE CALIFORNIA**

California Army and Air National Guard

Belle Chasse Naval Air Station

New Orleans, Louisiana

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Sept. 6, 2005

**BELLE CHASSE NAVAL AIR STATION, La** – Since the cry for help yawned in Louisiana, the California Army and Air National Guards have extended their support in Hurricane Katrina's aftermath.

California's initial dedication of 500 troops has increased to more than 700 in a span of three days. And food, water and supplies arrive even more abundantly to aid the remaining Bayou state victims.

"It's astounding how fast the states are being put together and deployed in such a short time. I'm amazed by the quick response from our fellow National Guard states," said Col. David Aycock, joint task force operations officer for the Louisiana National Guard.

About 20 units throughout the Golden State contribute to Louisiana's recovery. California's 870<sup>th</sup> Military Police, a 162-member Army Guard unit from Pittsburg, secures the Louis Armstrong International Airport in New Orleans. The 2/185<sup>th</sup> Armor Battalion situated in San Diego protects residential and business areas in downtown Orleans Parrish.

"It's an honor for the California guard and the rest of our guard brothers to be here. Every little contribution from all the states is going to make a huge difference," said Col. Steve Dabadie, Chief of Staff for the Louisiana National Guard.

The Joint Task Force California (JTFC) is commanded by Col. Scott Johnson, chief of staff of the Army Guard's 100<sup>th</sup> Joint Combat Support Command in Fairfield. Its key personnel are minutes away from flood-ravaged New Orleans. The JTFC key elements provide operations, logistics and communications in a coordinated effort to assist Louisiana's recovery.

The Air National Guard upped its efforts to four in-and-out flights daily. Using C-130 aircraft, Guardsmen transport troops, equipment and necessities to this facility. The Naval Air Station is the main transfer point for all supporting states.

California is joined by more than 30 National Guard states in Louisiana's recovery. Its soldier-contribution is one of the highest of all states.

Hurricane Katrina, a category five storm, ravaged Louisiana and parts of Mississippi, forcing hundreds of thousands of people homeless. California and Louisiana share a significant military relationship that resulted in the Golden State's immediate attention.

"Nothing comes close to the catastrophic event that happened here in the entire United States," said Dabadie. "That's why we're so thankful for California and other states for joining us. Our recovery efforts will now run quickly and smoothly."